Maude's Wedding

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"You aren't going to be a bridesmaid?" Lydia's expression was incredulous. "At your own sister's wedding?"

Jenna rolled her eyes. "I told you already. Our nieces are doing it, and one of our second cousins. Three bridesmaids is more than enough, and it would look pretty strange to have one twenty-year-old bridesmaid, when the others are nine, seven, and six."

Her friend wasn't placated. "If our Juliette was getting married, and I wasn't a bridesmaid, I honestly don't know what I'd do. It wouldn't bloody well happen, is all."

"It's not the same," said Jenna. "You and Juliette are close. Me and Maude never have been. And our brother has two girls, so obviously, Hollie and Arabella will want to be bridesmaids. Now, can we change the subject, please?"

Before Jenna blurted out that being in love with the bloke your sister was marrying tended to dampen any

enthusiasm, regarding said sister's forthcoming nuptials. Sometimes, keeping quiet really was the only solution.

The Triplets

Jessica Johns had always been the centre of attention, in her family. The eldest of four siblings, her parents adored her. Jess had always been the star of the show, the one who got all the praise. The steady arrival of her brothers, Ethan, David, and Matthew, had not caused any insecurity or jealousy for Jess, perhaps in part because Jessica remained the only girl. Her brothers were simply more devoted fans for the pretty, clever, and highly talented Jess.

But then, something happened that changed everything. Jessica's mother gave birth to triplets, three little girls, who were just as adorable as Jess had been as a baby. Their names were Charlotte, Emma, and Louisa. Suddenly, Jess found herself sidelined, as her parents fawned over the new arrivals.

At first, Jessica tried to be happy about her sisters. She loved them, and wanted them to be happy. But, as time went on, she found herself growing increasingly jealous of the attention they were getting. Everywhere

the family went, people would coo over the triplets, asking to hold them and take pictures with them. Jess felt forgotten, as though she were no longer special.

Jess decided she had had enough. She was tired of being ignored and overlooked. She wanted to be the centre of attention again, as she had been all her life.

Jessica started acting out, doing things she knew would get her parents' attention. She would throw tantrums, break things, and generally make a nuisance of herself. At first, her

parents tried to ignore her behaviour, thinking it was simply a phase. But, as Jessica's antics grew more extreme, they began to worry.

Finally, one day, Jessica's mother sat her down for a talk. "Jess," she said, "we love you very much, but we can't keep ignoring your behaviour. You're hurting yourself and others, and we need to find a way to help you."

Jess felt a pang of guilt, as she looked into her mother's tired, grey eyes. She knew she had been acting badly, but she couldn't help it. She just wanted to be noticed again.

As the days went on, Jessica's mother worked with her to find healthier ways to get attention. They started spending more one-on-one time together, doing things Jess enjoyed, including painting, dancing, and singing. Jess also started helping out more with her sisters, playing with them and helping to take care of them.

Slowly but surely, Jessica began to feel better. She realised that she didn't need to constantly be the centre of attention. She could still be special and loved, even if she wasn't the only daughter any more.

In the end, Jess learned an important lesson about jealousy and love. She realised that it was okay to feel jealous sometimes, but that it was important to find healthy ways to deal with those feelings. And most importantly, she learned that love was not a finite resource. There was enough love to go around, sufficient love for everyone, including her triplet sisters.

Edna and Katy

Edna and Katy were best friends, having been inseparable since early childhood.

However, as they grew older, Edna began to experience the occasional twinge of envy, verging upon jealousy, in relation to Katy. It started off with small things, such as Katy getting better grades, and being more popular at school. But, as time went on, the jealousy grew into something much more consuming.

Edna would constantly compare herself to Katy, wondering why she couldn't be as pretty, or as intelligent, or funny. She would watch as Katy effortlessly charmed everyone around her, while Edna struggled to make even a single friend.

The jealousy began to eat away at Edna, turning her into a bitter and resentful person. She would snap at Katy over the smallest things, and would often find herself making snide remarks about Katy, behind her back.

Katy, being the kind and caring person she truly was, tried her utmost to understand what was going on with her friend. She would listen patiently, as Edna vented her frustrations, and would offer words of encouragement and support.

But no matter how hard Katy tried, she couldn't seem to dislodge the jealousy that had taken hold of Edna. It was like a poison that had seeped into her, and no amount of kindness or understanding could cure it.

One Friday evening, Edna's jealousy reached boiling point. She had been invited to a party with Katy, but when they arrived, she saw that Katy was the centre of attention,

surrounded by a group of admiring friends. Edna felt a surge of anger and resentment, and before she knew it, she had stormed out of the party, leaving Katy behind. She spent the rest of the night alone, wallowing in her own misery and self-pity.

The next day, Katy came to visit Edna, hoping to talk things over and make amends. But Edna was still consumed by her jealousy, and she lashed out at Katy, accusing her of stealing all the attention, and leaving her in the shadows.

Katy was hurt and confused by Edna's behaviour, but she refused to give up on their friendship. She knew that, deep down, Edna was a good person, and that the jealousy was just a temporary phase. She was aware that Edna didn't have the most secure of family lives, and that this was probably a significant factor. Not an excuse, but certainly, a partial explanation. A reason.

Over time, Edna began to realise the error of her ways. She saw that her jealousy had driven a wedge between her and her best friend, and had made her into a bitter and unhappy person.

With Katy's help and support, Edna was able to overcome her jealousy, and learn to appreciate the unique qualities that made her who she was. She realised that she didn't need to be like Katy to be happy, and that their differences were what made their friendship so special.

In the end, Edna and Katy's friendship emerged stronger than ever. They continued to share their secrets and their laughter, but now they also shared a deeper understanding and appreciation of each other. And Edna knew that she would never let jealousy come between the two of them

again.

Twin Sisters

Julie and Amy were twins, fraternal rather than identical, but so similar in appearance that many people did assume them to be identical. Still, they had shared a womb, and Julie had been born precisely nine minutes before her sister.

Julie and Amy were inseparable throughout primary school, and did everything together. They shared the same interests, hobbies, and even clothes. However, there was one thing that set them apart: their personalities.

Julie was outgoing, friendly, and loved making new friends. She was always eager to meet new people and explore new places. Amy, meanwhile, was shy, introverted, and preferred to remain in her comfort zone. She was content with having Julie as her only friend, and didn't want anyone else to come between them.

As the girls grew older, Julie longed to expand her social circle, and make new friends. She wanted to join

clubs, attend parties, and enjoy life to the full. But every time she tried to do so, Amy would get upset, and tell Julie that she shouldn't need anyone else, other than herself.

At first, Julie tried to reason with Amy, and explain that it was natural to have more than one friend. She told her that she loved her, and that nothing could ever change that, but Amy was stubborn, and refused to listen. She would throw tantrums, cry, and even threaten to harm herself if Julie didn't comply with her wishes.

Julie was torn between her desire to make new friends, and her love for her sister. She didn't want to hurt Amy, but she

also didn't want to miss out on all the fun that life had to offer. She tried to find a compromise, but Amy wouldn't budge.

Julie, therefore, took matters into her own hands. She couldn't keep living her life according to Amy's "rules". She needed to break free, and be her own person. So, she started to make friends behind Amy's back. She would sneak out of the house, attend parties, and hang out with people she had met online. The twins' mother, Vivien, knew where Julie was at all times, but she understood the situation, and supported Julie in what she was doing.

At first, Julie felt guilty for betraying Amy's trust. She knew that she was lying to her sister, and that it would hurt Amy if she found out. However, as time went by, Julie realised that she was happier than she had ever been before. She had a group of friends who loved her for who she was, and she didn't have to hide her true self from them.

Eventually, Amy found out about Julie's secret life. She was devastated, feeling that Julie had betrayed her.

She couldn't understand why her sister would want to be friends with anyone else, when they had each other. She felt that she wasn't enough for Julie, and that she had failed as a sister.

However, Julie didn't give up on Amy. She knew that her sister was hurting, and that she needed her more than ever. She sat down with Amy, and the two had a heart-to-heart. Julie reassured Amy that she loved her, and that nothing could ever change that. She also explained that she needed to make new friends to grow as a person, and that it didn't mean that she loved Amy any less.

Slowly but surely, Amy came to understand Julie's point of

view. Realised that she couldn't keep Julie to herself, and that her expectations had been unfair. She started to open up to the idea of making new friends herself, and even joined a book club at school. It was on the same night as the ballet class, which she had used to attend with her twin. Ballet was something at which Julie was naturally good, but Amy, not so much so. And, in truth, Amy had never particularly enjoyed the ballet lessons.

Julie and Amy discovered that it was okay to have different personalities and interests. They also learned that it was important to respect each other's choices, and to support each other, no matter what. They remained best friends for life, but they also had their own separate lives and friends. And that was perfectly okay.

Trust Broken

Lia and Nick had been together for almost three years, and everything had seemed, to Lia, to be going well. How wrong she had been.

Lia found out, via her best friend, Georgia - whose own elder sister was friendly with Lia's sister, Angie - that Nick had cheated on her. With Angie, no less.

Angie was three years older than Lia, one year older than Nick, and she always had been the more confident and outgoing of the sisters. Lia had experienced envy, in relation to her sister, many times, but never jealousy. Never rage, and almost hatred.

The two people Lia had trusted the most had betrayed her, comprehensively. And her whole world had come crashing down around her.

At first, Lia didn't know what to do, or how to make sense of the situation. She was livid and broken, but also still convinced that she loved Nick. And Lia really didn't want to lose him. She confronted him about the affair,

but he just denied it, and tried to make excuses. Lia knew, in her heart, that he was lying, but she didn't want to believe it.

It was easier to persuade herself that maybe Georgia had got it wrong. She was even ready to believe that Georgia was lying, or that Georgia's sister, Deanna, had made a mistake, or told lies. Because somehow, even that hurt less than accepting reality.

As time went on, Lia herself spotted various signs that Nick was cheating on her. He was distant and secretive, and he

would often disappear for hours at a time, without explanation. Lia couldn't ignore the truth any longer.

Lia decided to confront Angie about the affair. She needed to hear her sister's side of the story. So, she paid a visit to her sister's studio flat, just outside the town centre.

Angie didn't deny it. She was vaguely apologetic, and claimed that it was a mistake, but she didn't seem to fully grasp the significance, from Lia's point of view. Her own sister had betrayed her, and that was the ultimate knife twist. Hurt so much more even than what Nick had done.

Lia broke up with Nick. She couldn't trust him any more, and she knew that she deserved better. It was a painful decision, but Lia knew that it was the right one.

As for Angie, Lia decided to distance herself from her sister, indefinitely. She couldn't forgive her for what she had done, and she didn't want to be around her any more. It was a difficult time for Lia, but she knew that she would eventually heal, and move on from the betrayal.

In the end, Lia learned that sometimes the people we trust the most can hurt us the most. But she also discovered that she was strong enough to overcome the pain, and move on to a better future.